

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS – ROUND TWO

Preservation Partners Task Force October 2006

1. Historic Districts
 - a. The Council would establish a new program to create separate Historic Districts within the city in order to “preserve and enhance historic structures within the residential districts of the City,” and “enhance the character, quality, diversity, livability, and identity of the community.” Districts would be based on subdivisions or neighborhoods with a concentration of historically significant properties.
 - b. Property owners, residents, community organizations or the Falls Church Historical Commission, could initiate the process for creating a Historical District based upon neighborhoods or subdivisions. This process would include establishment of boundaries and a survey to identify “contributing” and “non-contributing” properties within a proposed District. Upon receiving a proposal, the Commission, supported by the city staff, would review it and advise the Council on the proposal’s merits.
 - c. Citizens would be encouraged to form historic district associations to advise and assist the Commission and City staff in proposing districts.
 - d. The Council will consider the views of affected residents in determining whether to approve the creation of a District. Approval would be based on new criteria added to the Falls Church Historic and Cultural Conservation District (HCCD) Ordinance, reflecting National Registry criteria.
 - e. The Ordinance would be amended to define policies for protecting contributing properties. Properties currently on the city’s Registry of historically protected places would remain covered by the Ordinance whether or not they were included in a Historic District.
2. A new category of protected places, Landmark properties, would be created and would receive the highest level of review and protection.
 - a. Property owners, residents, community organizations or the Commission, could nominate a property for Landmark status. Applications would be reviewed by the Commission and City staff and, if they met with criteria established in the Ordinance, would be recommended to the Council for Landmark status.
 - b. The Commission and the City staff would assist Landmark owners in applying for inclusion in the National and State registries.
 - c. In addition to tax benefits available to owners of properties on the National and State registries, Landmark property owners would be eligible for local property tax relief under a new program created by

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the Council. Tax relief would be available to Landmark owners who accept restrictive easements that protect their properties' historic value.

3. The Council would remedy weaknesses in the ordinance, including those identified by the Historic Architecture Review Board and listed in the July 2005 staff report to Council.
4. Council would establish a separate historic preservation function within the City administration, adequately staffing and funded, to carry out the objectives of the historic ordinance, including annual updates property review, and support for HARB and Historic Commission.
5. Council would extend the Task Force until December 2006 to enable the Task Force to coordinate a public education and outreach program on the historic preservation program.
6. The Task Force will continue to study a possible application for Certified Local Government Status and report its recommendation to the Council in December 2006.